

## Abstract

Mandarin Tone 2 is canonically described as a high rising tone. However, recently, T2 in Taiwan was found to have other contour types: the dipping contour (323) and falling (31) variants (Fon, 1997; H. J. Hsu, 2004), with the former being considered as a normal rising tone, but the later totally losing the rising feature. Those were all found in Taiwanese (Tw)-Taiwan Mandarin(TM) bilinguals. The reasons causing this tonal variation is supposed to be relating to the language backgrounds and other social and linguistic factors from previous studies. However, no study has confirmed those correlated factors, especially the comparison between Tw-TM bilinguals and TM monolinguals. This study thus aims to discover what the T2 variation is and where it occurs. By sampling 24 subjects, aged 17-27, with half Tw-TM bilinguals and half TM monolinguals, we conducted three experiments to test the T2 in different contexts. Results showed that instead of the falling variant, more speakers produced a level variant and a small amount of low-rising variant. Besides, the bilinguals did produce more T2 variations than the monolinguals. The results indicated that language background does affect the T2 variation among young speakers in Taiwan. Moreover, the high percentage of the Level variant support the finding of a narrower tonal range of TM, compared to the standard Mandarin. Other factors, such as genders, regions, vowels, tonal environments and sentence positions were also found to have influence on T2 variations.